The EARL of Essex his SPEECH, at the Delivering the following Petition to His most Sacred Majesty, *Jan.* 25. 80.

May it please Your Majesty,

THe Lords here present, together with divers other Peers of the Realm, taking notice that by your late Proclamation, your Majesty has declared an intention of calling a Parliament, *at* Oxford; *and observing from History and Records how unfortunate many such assemblies have bin, when called at a Place remote from the Capital City; as particularly the Congress in Henry the Seconds time at* Clarindon; *Three several Parliaments at* Oxford *in Henry the thirds time; and at* Coventry *in Henry the Sixths time; With divers others which have proved very fatal to those Kings, and have been followed with great mischief on the whole Kingdom: and considering the present posture of affairs, the many jealousies and discontents, which are amongst the People, we have great cause to apprehend that the consequences of the sitting of a Parliament now at* Oxford *may be as fatal to your Majesty and the Nation, as those others mentioned have bin to the then Reigning Kings; and therefore we do conceive that we cannot answer it to God, to your Majesty, or to the People, If we, being Peers of the Realm, should not on so important an Occasion humbly offer our advice to your Majesty; that if possible, Your Majesty may be prevailed with, to alter this (as we apprehend) unseasonable Resolution. The Grounds and Reasons of our Opinion, are contained in this our Petition, which We humbly Present to Your Majesty.*

To the *KING*'s most Excellent Majesty.

The Humble Petition and Advice of the Lords under-named, PEERS *of the* REALM.

Humbly Sheweth,

THat whereas Your Majesty hath been pleased, by divers Speeches, and Messages to Your Houses of Parliament, rightly to represent to them the Dangers that Threatned Your Majesties Person, and the whole Kingdom, from the Mischievous, and wicked Plots of the *Papists*, and the suddain Growth of a Forreign-Power, unto which, no Stop or Remedy could be Provided, unless it were by Parliament, and an Union of Your Majesties *Protestant* Subjects, in one Mind, and one Interest.

And the Lord *Chancellor*, in Pursuance of Your Majesties Commands, having more at large Demonstrated the said Dangers to be as great, as we in the midst of our Fears could Imagine them: And so pressing, that our Liberties, Religion, Lives, and the whole Kingdom would be certainly Lost, if a speedy Provision were not made against them.

And your Majesty, on the 21. of *April*, 1679, Having called unto your Council, many Honorable and Worthy Persons, and declared to them and the whole Kingdom, That being sensible of the evil Effects of a single Ministry, or private Advice, or Forreign Committee, for the General Direction of your Affaires; Your Majesty would for the Future Refer all things unto that Council, and by the constant Advice of them, together with the frequent use of your great Council, the *Parliament*, Your Majesty was hereafter Resolved to Govern the Kingdoms; We began to hope we should see an end of our Miseryes.

But to our Unspeakable Grief and Sorrow, we soon found our Expectations Frustrated. The *Parliament*, then subsisting, was Prorogued and Dissolved before it could perfect what was intended for our Relief and Security: and though another was thereupon called, yet by many Prorogations it was put off, till the 21. of

Oct. past, and notwithstanding your Majesty was then again pleased to acknowledge, that neither Your Person, nor Your Kingdom could be safe, till the matter of the Plot was gone thorow, It was unexpectedly Prorogued on the 10th. of this *Month*, before any sufficient Order could be taken therein: All their Just and Pious Endeavors to save the Nation were overthrown, the good Bills they had been Industriously preparing to Unite all Your Majesties *Protestant* Subjects brought to nought; The discovery of the *Irish* Plot stifled; The witnesses that came in frequently more fully to declare that, both of *England* and *Ireland*, discouraged. Those Forreign Kingdoms and States, who by a happy conjunction with us might give a Check to the French Powers, Disheartned, even to such a Despair of their own Security against the growing greatness of that Monarch, as we fear may induce them to take new Resolutions, and perhaps such as may be fatal to us: The Strength and Courage of our Enemyes both at Home and Abroad increased? And our selves left in the utmost danger of seeing our Country brought into utter Desolation.

In these Extremities, we had nothing under *God* to Comfort us, but the Hopes, that Your Majesty (being touched with the Groans of Your Perishing People) would have suffered Your Parliament to Meet at the Day unto which it was Prorogued; and that no further Interruption should have been given to their Proceedings, in order to their Saving of the Nation. But that failed us too; for then we heard that Your Majesty, by the private Suggestion of some Wicked Persons, Favourers of Popery, Promoters of French Designs, and Enemies to Your Majesty and the Kingdom (without the Advice, and as we have good Reason to believe, against the Opinion, even of Your *Privy-Council*) had been prevailed with to Dissolve it, & to call another to Meet at *Oxford*, where neither Lords nor Commons can be in Safety; but will be dayly exposed to the Swords of the *Papists*, and their Adherents, of whom too many are crept into Your Majesties Guards. The Liberty of speaking according to their Consciences, will be thereby Destroyed, and the Validity of all their Acts, and Proceedings consisting in it, left Disputable. The Straitness of the Place, no way admits of such a concourse of Persons, as now follows every Parliament, the Witnesses which are necessary to give Evidence against the Popish Lords; such Judges, or others whom the Commons have Impeached, or had Resolved to Impeach, can neither bear the Charge of going thither, nor trust themselves under the Protection of a Parliament, that is it self Evidently under the Power of Guards and Souldiers.

The Premisses considered, We Your Majesties Petitioners, out of a Just Abhorrence of such a dangerous and pernicious Counsel, (which the Authors have not dared to avow) and the direful Apprehensions of the Calamities & Miseries that may ensue thereupon; do make it our most Humble Prayer, and Advice, That the *Parliament* may not Sit at a Place, where it will not be able to Act with that Freedom, which is necessary, and especially, to Give unto their Acts and Proceedings, that Authority which they ought to have amongst the People, and have ever had, unless Impaired by some Awe upon them, (of which there is no Precedent) and that Your Majesty would be graciously pleased, to Order it to Sit at *Westminster*, (it being the usual Place, and where they may Consult and Act with Safety and Freedom)

And Your Petitioners shall ever Pray, &c.

Monmouth, *Kent*, *Huntington*, *Salisbury*, *Clare*, *Stamford*, *Bedford*, *Shaftsbury*, *Mordant*, *Evers*, *Paget*, *Grey*, *Herbert*, *Howard*, *Delamer*.

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